



Fire Update

Meadow Fire

**Nez Perce
National Forest**

September 11, 2006 9:00 am

Internet Address: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc>

or: <http://www.inciweb.org>

For Fire Information Phone: (208) 842-9225 open 8 am to 9 pm

For Immediate Release

Fire Facts

The Meadow Fire is managed by Doug Turman's Northern Rockies Incident Management Team.

Date Started: September 3, 2006 **Cause of Ignition:** lightning **Location:** Red River, Idaho

Size: 6,400 acres **Percent Contained:** 10% **Estimated Time of Containment:** Unknown

Number of Personnel: 197 **Equipment:** 1 feller buncher, 1 dozer, 1 skidgine, 5 engines, 3 water tenders, 2 excavators, 1 brush cutter

Aircraft: Shared air resources with the Nez Perce NF and other surrounding large fires

20-person crews: 5, including 2 Hotshot crews

Cost to date: \$655,000 **Injuries Today:** 0

Cooperators: Idaho County Sheriff's Department, Idaho County Emergency Management Services, Nez Perce National Forest

Weather Changes Influence the Meadow Fire

Red River, Idaho –Fire activity increased on Sunday as a warmer, dryer weather pattern developed over the fire area. This activity is expected to increase over the next several days as temperatures return to the 80's and relative humidity drops back into the upper teens. Some flare-ups along the fire edge occurred yesterday, with group torching of up to 1 ½ acres of trees at a time. Roads on the west/northwest side of the fire have been treated to remove brush and provide a contingency line in case the fire spreads in that direction. Acreage of the Meadow fire remained at 6,400 acres. Three 20-person crews, a water tender and dozer continued to support the Nez Perce National Forest firefighters on the Baker Fire southwest of Elk City.

The Incident Command Post for the Meadow Fire is located at Red River Ranger Station and the fire camp is located at York's field. Local residents are encouraged to reduce speeds due to increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Yesterday's Fire Activities

Sprinkler systems, hoses and pumps around residences in the area between Red River Corrals and Red River Hot Springs were maintained. Crews and equipment continued to support structure protection efforts on the northwest side of the fire closest to private land by mopping up firelines and brushing out roads on the west/northwest corner of the fire. The fire continued to slowly back through areas with heavy concentrations of fuel, torching single trees and groups of trees as it heated up under thick tree canopies where little moisture has penetrated from passing thunderstorms last week. Unburned ground fuels remain as the primary carrier of the fire's progression. Short uphill runs occurred on ridges exposed to winds. Firefighting resources, including engines and water tenders, continued to patrol and monitor the northwest and west side of the fire to keep the fire from moving further downslope into Red River and to support structure protection activities. There have been no evacuations during this fire event.

Most active burning has been confined to pockets of unburned vegetation within the perimeter, or short runs along and immediately outside the perimeter. The Magruder Corridor continues to be patrolled for spot fires, and structure protection is in place at 14 Mile Trailhead, Granite Springs Campground and Green Mountain Lookout. The fire has burned to within several hundred yards of Granite Springs Campground, with numerous spot fires located along the fire's edge throughout the fire area.

Today's Planned Events

Today's priority will continue to be firefighter and public safety. Primary emphasis will continue to be structure protection along Forest Road 234 between Red River Corrals and Red River Hot Springs. Crews will continue with hazardous fuel reduction activities around residences and private land.

Safety zones, lookout vantage points and long escape routes for firefighters have been established in the fire area in those locations where crews and equipment are actively working on line construction or contingency lines. The number one hazard continues to be snags and green trees with weakened root systems from fire damage. The Magruder Corridor (Montana Road) will continue to be in patrol status with facilities protection in place at 14-mile trailhead, Granite Springs Campground and Green Mountain Lookout.

Two 20-person crews and a water tender from the Meadow Fire have been temporarily assigned to the 27-acre Baker Fire located southwest of Elk City. They will continue with mop-up efforts there. The Lolo Hotshot crew has been temporarily assigned to the Heavens Gate Complex near Riggins, Idaho to assist with burnout operations there over the next two days.

Today's Weather Forecast and Fire Behavior

Weather will change to a warmer, dryer pattern over the fire for the next few days. Temperatures will rise to the mid to upper 80's on the fire and relative humidity will drop back down into the teens, resulting in increased fire activity each day. The majority of the fire area is mostly uncontrolled fire perimeter made up of numerous spot fires. Ground vegetation under the tree canopy is still dry and will contribute to increased single and group tree torching. Yesterday's warmer weather has already dried out lighter fuels and poor humidity recovery at night will allow fire activity to pick up earlier in the day. Tree regeneration in past harvest units and old burn areas from previous fires will be effective barriers to fire spread in some areas under these conditions.

Maximum temperatures today will reach 76-81 degrees in the fire area and the uppers 80's at the Red River Ranger Station. Minimum relative humidity between 16-21 percent will contribute to active burning across the fire area.

Weather outlook for Tuesday is for higher temperatures and lower relative humidity as a high pressure system remains over the area. Temperatures over the fire will be from 80-84 degrees on the fire and near 90 degrees at Red River, with relative humidity in the upper teens.

Area, Road and Trail Closures

For public safety, an area closure is currently in effect throughout the area surrounding the fire, including areas where the fire is most likely to spread as it becomes more active. Access to the forest is closed at the following locations: Forest Road 234 (except to local residents) and the Magruder Corridor (Montana Road) at the Red River Ranger Station; Poet Creek on the east side of the Magruder Corridor; and Black Hawk Mountain. The closure is not expected to be lifted until fire conditions improve. Visit the Grangeville Interagency Dispatch Center website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc> or www.incweb.org for maps and other information about the closure.

Other Messages

Hunters in the area are reminded that fire activity will increase over the next few days as warmer, dryer weather quickly returns to the area. Be on the lookout for smoke from holdover lightning strikes from last week's storms that will start to show up, and report them as soon as possible. Hunters are also reminded to put all fires dead out, both camp fires and warming fires, so they don't contribute to the problem of additional fire starts. Firefighting resources remain scarce with over five hundred twenty nine 20-person crews (10,580 firefighters), 1,017 engines with crews, 210 aircraft with crews currently assigned to fires, primarily in the western United States.

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